



CLASSIFIEDS
are you looking for:
job villa shop etc.
look page : 26

MPs submit motion to grill Al-Roudan

Real estate scams, Fund violations, Authority inadequacies

By Ahmed Al-Naqeeb
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 4: MPs Mubarak Al-Hajraf and Humaidi Al-Subai'e submitted a joint interpellation motion against Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudan. The motion consists of five grilling points including the real estate scams, recorded violations at the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and inadequacies in the Public

Authority for Industry.

The parliamentary Budget and Final Accounts Committee on Monday discussed the capital budget for construction projects, hardware purchase and maintenance for the new fiscal year – 2019/2020.

Committee Chairman MP Adnan Abdulsamad disclosed that the Ministry of Finance made a presentation on the capital budget for the new fiscal year estimated at KD 3.3 billion – 79 percent for development projects and 21 percent for hardware and equipment.

During the meeting, it was revealed that the ministries of Health, Electricity and Water are the most successful public institutions in cutting cost despite their slow pace in the implementation of development projects.

No residence stickers on passports

KUWAIT CITY, March 4: An amendment has been made by the Kuwaiti authorities to the Foreigners Residence Law according to which no residence visa stickers will be placed on the passports of expatriates, reports Al-Anba daily quoting Egyptian consulate in Kuwait.

The Consulate told the Egyptians in Kuwait that they will now be able to exit Kuwait using their civil IDs from March 10, provided they hold a valid passport and civil ID since all residence data is recorded in the civil IDs.

Earlier, the Arab Times quoting the Deputy

Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Lt Gen Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah had said the Interior Ministry had issued a decision to cancel the residence permit stickers on the passports calling it part of an ongoing process to upgrade services in various government departments.

For his part Assistant Undersecretary for Residence Affairs Major-General Talal Marafie had said the data included in the residence stickers will be mentioned in the civil IDs.

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Monday sent a cable of condolences to US President Donald Trump over victims of hurricanes.

In his cable, His Highness the Amir expressed his sincere condolences to the victims of the hurricanes that struck the state of Alabama and resulted in the deaths of dozens of people and destruction of public facilities, wishing mercy to the deceased and swift recovery to the injured. (KUNA)

— See Also Page 8

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) signed Monday a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UK Export Finance (UKEF) to provide financial support within the petroleum industry.

A press statement by the KPC indicated MoU included \$3 billion worth of loans and credit facilities for UK services and products invested into KPC oriented projects and its affiliated companies. (KUNA)

DOHA: Qatar said on Monday it was still studying the purchase of Russia's S-400 missile air defence system, adding the potential deal – reportedly opposed by Saudi Arabia – was none of Riyadh's business.

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani also said there was no sign of a thaw in a Gulf row over allegations by Saudi Arabia and some other Arab states that Qatar supports terrorism. Doha denies the charges. (RTRS)

BRUSSELS: The European Commission and the State of Qatar initialled in Brussels Monday an aviation agreement, the first such agreement between the EU and an Arab Gulf state.

The agreement will upgrade the rules and standards for flights between Qatar and the EU, and will set a new global benchmark by committing to strong, fair competition mechanisms, and including provisions not normally covered by bilateral air transport agreements, such as social or environmental matters, said an European Commission press release. (KUNA)

ADEN: The Houthis militia refused to hand in the control of Hodeidah port to a neutral party to the Yemeni conflict, accusing Martin Griffiths, claiming that the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, represents Britain, not the UN.

A statement by head of the Houthis group negotiation team and spokesman Mohammad Abdulsalam said that the Stockholm accord did not mention any necessity for the presence of a neutral side in Hodeidah port.

The agreement called for the presence of all sides in the port, added the spokesman. (KUNA)

AMMAN: The Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU)'s Political Affairs and Parliamentary Relations Committee has announced opposition to all initiatives that do not heed Palestinian people interests, especially much-anticipated US President Donald Trump's 'deal of the century.'

The committee members had reiterated support to the Palestinian people and affirmed that the Palestinian cause would remain the core issue for the whole Arab nation. Chairman of the committee and Kuwaiti MP Dr Ouda Al-Ruwai'e told KUNA following the committee meeting. (KUNA)

WASHINGTON: The US Consulate General, Jerusalem will merge on Monday into US Embassy, Jerusalem to form a single diplomatic mission, a step that follows Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's announcement in October 2018 that the two missions and teams would be combined, it was announced late Sunday.

State Department Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino said in a statement "this decision was driven by our global efforts to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our diplomatic engagements and operations." (KUNA)

ALGIERS: Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, facing mass protests over his 20 years in power, will run in April's elections, his campaign manager said on Sunday, with Ennahar TV saying he had offered to step down after a year if re-elected.

The announcement read out by Abdelghani Zaalane on Bouteflika's behalf said the president pledged to organise an early election, with Ennahar TV saying that would be held within a year.

The comments are likely to be viewed as an attempt to appease those who had taken to the streets for 10 days to protest against the 82-year-old's plans to remain in office and to allow him an exit on his own terms. (RTRS)

LOS ANGELES: Actor Luke Perry, known for roles in "Beverly Hills 90210" and "Riverdale," died on Monday after suffering a massive stroke on Wednesday. He was 52.

"He was surrounded by his children Jack and Sophie, fiance Wendy Madison Bauer, ex-wife Minnie Sharp, mother Ann Bennett, step-father Steve Bennett, brother Tom Perry, sister Amy Coder, and other close family and friends," his rep said in a statement. "The family appreciates the outpouring of support and prayers that have been extended to Luke from around the world, and respectfully request privacy in this time of great mourning. No further details will be released at this time." (RTRS)



HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah with the outstanding graduands of the university.

KUNA photo

Amir sponsors graduation ceremony for KU honor students

Under patronage and with the attendance of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kuwait University (KU) held its annual graduation ceremony for honor students for the academic year 2017-2018. The ceremony was held Monday at Sheikh Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Theater at the KU campus in Shuwaikh.

His Highness the Amir was welcomed upon arrival by Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi, KU Director Dr Hussein Al-Ansari and university senior officials.

The ceremony was attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His High-

ness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, senior state officials and a host of graduates and citizens.

Speaking on behalf of the graduates, valedictorian Sheikh Duaj Mubarak Al-Duaj Al-Sabah thanked His Highness the Amir for his kind patronage of the event, which he said encouraged faculty members and students alike to exert more efforts in their areas of expertise.

He dedicated his academic excellence to His Highness the Amir.

He also thanked all of KU's professors for imparting their knowledge to him and fellow graduates, wishing Kuwait continued development, peace and prosperity. (KUNA)

Scores of DAESH fighters surrender in battle

DEIR EZZOR, Syria, March 4, (Agencies): Scores of Islamic State fighters surrendered to US-backed forces on Monday, a war monitor said, after a ferocious assault to overrun their last shred of territory in eastern Syria.

Islamic State faces defeat in Baghouz, the only remaining patch of land it still holds in the area straddling Iraq and Syria where it declared a caliphate in 2014, although it still has control in a few remote areas.

Early on Monday, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) said they had slowed their assault on Islamic State because more civilians were trapped in the area, though it vowed to capture it soon.

A convoy of trucks was visible heading into Baghouz in the morning, and the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 150 jihadists left the enclave, along with about 250 other people.

There was no immediate confirmation of

the surrenders from the SDF or any indication as to how many jihadists remained holed up inside.

Islamic State's fighters have gradually fallen back on Baghouz at the Iraqi border as they retreated down the Euphrates in the face of sustained assault in both countries after its grotesque displays of cruelty roused global fury.

Despite the setbacks, the group remains a deadly threat, developing alternatives to its caliphate ranging from rural insurgency to urban bombings by affiliates in the region and beyond, many governments say.

The Syrian Democratic Forces this weekend resumed its assault on the group's pocket in the village of Baghouz, the culmination of a campaign that included the capture of Raqqa in 2017, when IS also faced other big defeats in Iraq and Syria.

The militia had already paused its attack

for weeks to allow thousands of people to flee the area, including Islamic State supporters, fighters, children, local people and some of the group's captives.

It said on Friday that only jihadists remained, but now says some more civilians are left.

"We're slowing down the offensive in Baghouz due to a small number of civilians held as human shields by DAESH," said SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali on Twitter, using an Arabic acronym for Islamic State.

However, "the battle to retake the last ISIS holdout is going to be over soon," he added.

Dozens of trucks similar to those that had evacuated people from the enclave in recent weeks were visible heading back there on Monday and the drivers said they were going to pick people up at Baghouz.

Col Sean Ryan, spokesman for the US-

led coalition, said in an email that he could not verify who Islamic State was holding but hoped they would be released unharmed.

On Sunday, the SDF faced landmines, car bombs, tunnel ambushes and suicide attacks as they attempted to overrun the enclave – tactics the jihadist group has honed through its hard-fought retreat down the Euphrates.

Reuters photographs from Baghouz on Sunday showed dark plumes of smoke rising above houses and palm trees, and SDF fighters shooting into the Islamic State enclave.

While the capture of Baghouz would mark a milestone in the fight against Islamic State, the group is expected to remain a security threat as an insurgent force with sleeper cells and some pockets of remote territory.

Dutch recall envoy

Khamenei casts doubt on Europe

LONDON, March 4, (Agencies): Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had advised the government last July not to rely on European efforts to protect Tehran against US sanctions, months after Washington withdrew from a nuclear deal with Iran and reimposed penalties.

The release of Khamenei's speech nine months after his meeting with the cabinet, showed while President Hassan Rouhani was trying to save the nuclear deal with European powers, who remained committed despite the US exit, Khamenei was not optimistic about the efforts.

The Europeans would naturally say they are protecting Iranian interests with their package "but (the Iranian government) should not make this a main issue," Khamenei was quoted as saying by his official website on Monday.

Khamenei's comments were published a week after Rouhani rejected the resignation of Foreign

Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, a US-educated veteran diplomat who championed the nuclear deal.

The scepticism from Khamenei casts doubt on efficiency of Zarif's past and present efforts to keep the agreement alive.

Iran and six major world powers reached a nuclear deal in 2015 after more than a decade of negotiations. Under the deal, sanctions imposed by the United States, European Union and United Nations were lifted in return for Iran agreeing long-term curbs on a nuclear programme that the West suspected was aimed at creating a nuclear bomb.

The Netherlands on Monday recalled its ambassador to Iran for consultations after diplomats at its embassy in Tehran were expelled, Foreign Minister Stef Blok said.

The move comes just two months after the Netherlands accused Iran of being behind political killings in the Netherlands that triggered new European Union sanctions against Tehran.

Sheikh Ahmad still Asia chief

JAKARTA, March 4, (RTRS): Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah has been re-elected president of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) for an eighth term despite being embroiled in a forgery case brought by Swiss investigators.

The long-serving Kuwaiti, a powerful ally of International Olympic Committee (IOC) head Thomas Bach, was re-elected unanimously at the OCA general assembly in Bangkok, the OCA has said.

An IOC member since 1992, Sheikh Ahmad stepped down from his roles in the global Olympic body in November, less than two weeks after the Public Prosecutor of Geneva submitted a forgery accusation to a criminal court against the Kuwaiti and four others.

Sheikh Ahmad had been head of Olympic Solidarity – the multi-million dollar IOC purse that funds sports projects globally – and the head of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC).



The Liberation Tower decorated with colorful lights representing the colors of the Kuwaiti flag.
— Abdullah Almuhareb-KUNA

▲	US\$/KD 0.30340/50
▼	Euro/KD 0.3442
■	Yen/KD 0.0027
▼	British £/KD 0.4005
▲	KSE +11.07 pts at closing March 4 See Page 22
▼	DOW -287.77 pts at 20:25 March 4 See Page 23
▼	Nasdaq -66.73 pts at 20:25 March 4
▲	FTSE +27.66 pts at closing March 4
▲	Nikkei +219.35 pts at closing March 4
▼	Gold \$1,309.95 per oz (London)
▲	NYMEX crude \$56.23 pb
▲	Brent crude \$65.38 pb
▲	3-month \$ LIBOR rate 2.59850%